

State funds run out

The "Monster Course": improvements

by Lloyd Harris
and Glenn Sherman

Should the course Behavior, Culture, and Society be continued? The funds run out this year and the University will have to pay for all of the course. This is the main dilemma facing Behavior.

Behavior, Culture, and Society is one of the courses on campus that has been causing many problems among students. The course is held every Monday and Wednesday in the University Commons with three hundred eighty students in the course.

The first problem is the impersonal atmosphere that surround the student in the large lectures. Many students came to Drew because they thought it was a small school and that it had few students, and then find that they are subjected to a class in which they are treated more or less as if they were a number. In other words, the class is impersonalized.

The main reason for the class being so big is that Psychology is the number two major among students and because Behavior is the prerequisite for any other Social Science course. All Psychology majors are required to take it their freshman year.

Another problem has been the procedure of taking tests in the gymnasium. This so-called procedure can be compared to the taking of S.A.T.'s in high school. You have three hundred and eighty students crammed into one huge gymnasium which creates problems of cheating or having a friend take an exam for you.

Students have also been complaining about not getting their test questions back after they have been graded. The reason the test questions have not been given back is that the Behavior professors want to use the questions for next year.

The main failure of Behavior, though, is that the extensive readings do not jive with the lectures.

In an interview with Dr. Miller, professor of Anthropology, he explained some of the ways to alleviate some of these problems and also went on to explain that Behavior contains some of the ideas of modern day learning.

One way to solve the impersonal format of testing is to have these tests in several rooms instead of having everybody crowding into one large gymnasium. This will help in that it won't take the professors such a long time to pass out the exams and that the teachers can keep a closer eye on students who are tempted to cheat.

Behavior demonstrates the example of modern day learning in that it is a course

involved in teaching the relation between Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology; instead of teaching these in the traditional way (Anthropology I, Psychology I, and Sociology I.) By teaching this course, the professors teach one less class than they normally would. When the state funding runs out, though, the professors will be required to teach one more class than at present.

The use of audio-visual aids has proven very important in the success of the course. If you miss a lecture or are taking another course at the same time as Behavior, you can buy or listen to the tapes of the lecture at the Instructional Center. Starting this week, lectures will be played on WERD in the evening.

Dr. Miller also said that the course still needs much improvement, but he enjoys teaching this course much more than teaching Anthropology I in that he finds

he learns a lot from other lecturers and he also gets a better understanding of his colleagues.

Some of the improvements that could be made are as follows: They could make the course completely on audio or video tape and they could also script the lectures. Also they could have more discussion groups during the week. One other innovative idea by Dr. Miller is to make the course pass/no credit instead of going into the complicated way of scoring with medians and standard deviations. He said this because of the fact that graduate schools do not look at your freshman and sophomore grades.

There has been much feedback about the Behavior course so if you have a complaint, Dr. Miller and the remainder of the Behavioral staff will be most interested in hearing your criticism, positive or negative.

Faculty questions why it was not consulted in By-Law change

on Rights and Responsibilities and a proposal for a University Judicial body. (See last week's ACORN.)

Oxnam outlined the proposed structure and explained that, at its meeting two weeks ago, the Trustees changed the University by-laws to relieve the faculty of disciplinary responsibility in all but academic areas.

Several faculty members questioned the procedure by which the President carried through the by-law change without first consulting the faculty. Oxnam said that he believed the faculty had expressed informal approval of the change.

Faculty members also expressed confusion over whether, in light of the by-law change, they should change their own regulations under which they have claimed Judicial authority. Oxnam said that no action should be taken until the new University judicial structure is in force. This raised a question as to how the University would handle any serious cases that might arise in the next few weeks. Oxnam said that this responsibility would rest with the academic Dean of each school.

The discussion surrounding the confusion over judicial authority seemed to highlight the need for a major Faculty decision-making body. One Faculty member was prompted to call a "point of order" and ask the President to cease his discussion of the Judicial structure and turn to the matter of the task force.

The resolution which brought about the formation of the University Faculty task force was accompanied by another resolution which urged that the Faculty meet again in the near future. Oxnam responded to this saying that there would be no reason for the Faculty to meet until it came to consider the findings of the task force. Several professors have expressed the desire that the University Faculty meet in regular sessions.

Oxnam also said that the committee should consider whether student representatives should be admitted to the meetings.